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LETTER DATED 23 JANUARY 1996 FROM THE SECRETARY-GENERAL
ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I have the honour to convey the attached communication, dated 23 January 1996, which I have received from the Secretary-General of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

I would appreciate your bringing it to the attention of the members of the Security Council.

(Signed) Boutros BOUTROS-GHALI

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Annex

Letter dated 23 January 1996 from the Secretary-General of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization addressed to the Secretary-General

In accordance with United Nations Security Council resolution 1031 (1995), I attach the second report on the operations of the Implementation Force (IFOR). The information contained in this report is accurate as of 18 January 1996. I would appreciate your making this report available to the United Nations Security Council.

You will appreciate that the timing of this second report precluded a full summary of the degree to which the parties have complied with the relevant terms of the military annex to the Dayton Accord as required of them by D+30 (19 January 1996). For this reason, I would like to use this opportunity to convey to you the current assessment of the state of compliance by SACEUR, General Joulwan.

General Joulwan reports that the spirit of cooperation between IFOR and the parties continues and that substantial progress has been made in meeting the compliance terms. Overall, the cease-fire is holding firm and the number of ill-disciplined firing incidents continues to reduce. Most importantly, the parties have complied with the requirement to withdraw their forces from the zones of separation, despite some local problems of shortages of fuel and mechanical difficulties. Great strides have been taken towards the clearance of mines but the sheer scale of the task, compounded by inclement weather and a lack of equipment, have conspired to make the deadline for full compliance impracticable. Concern remains about the apparent scorched earth policies being implemented by all sides, about the number of foreign forces remaining in the theatre and about the issue of prisoner release which is the only act of deliberate non-compliance. This latter issue affects all the parties, but it is one over which IFOR does not have enforcement authority.

Turning to the civil side of implementation, the mission and compliance issues are, in many ways, far more demanding than those on the military side. However, now that the High Representative is firmly established in the theatre and is building his organization to influence the civil side of the peace mission, I am encouraged about the future success of the overall task. For our part, IFOR's overarching aim is to foster a security environment under which the civil organizations can do their important work effectively.

In summary, Operation Joint Endeavour has started well and we see prospects for long-term success in the implementation of the military aspects of the Peace Agreement. Our actions have remained even-handed and this has had a significant impact on the acceptance of IFOR by the parties and their cooperation with our forces throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina.

I am also sending a copy of this report to the High Representative, Mr. Carl Bildt.

(Signed) Javier SOLANA

Appendix

Second report to the United Nations Security Council on IFOR operations

The present report covers the period between the last report, dated 22 December 1995, and 18 January 1996.

Deployment of the Implementation Force (IFOR)

1. Transfer of authority from the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) to IFOR took place on 20 December (D Day), four days following initial deployment of the lead elements of the main body forces. Since then, the build-up of IFOR has continued apace. As of today, 18 January, over 50 per cent of the ground component of IFOR, numbering more than 35,000 troops, have been deployed and the complete planned force should be fully deployed by D+90. The headquarters of the ACE Rapid Reaction Corps (ARRC), as the Land Force Command, all three Multinational Divisional (MND) headquarters and that of the Commander for Support have been established. The three MNDs have extensive presence in their areas of responsibility. In addition, significant maritime and air assets are also committed to IFOR.

2. The Force deployment is progressing well, despite severe weather. IFOR is being rapidly deployed using land, sea and air assets. A number of IFOR transit agreements have been necessary over and through Austria, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovakia, Slovenia, the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) and Switzerland. There has been extensive cooperation in this effort. Both the NATO and national movement coordination and control agencies have achieved a very substantial lift capability, which has included more than 1,800 flights, 280 trains and 28 ship movements. In addition, bridging the Sava River in order to establish the necessary lines of communication from the north has been a major achievement.

3. The media coverage of both the deployment and operations has been extensive and generally supportive and positive to IFOR. An information campaign has been successfully started to disseminate information and local news by radio, the locally produced IFOR newspaper, Herald of Peace and the wide distribution of information posters.

Participation by non-NATO countries

4. Fifteen of the 16 NATO countries are contributing forces to IFOR and Iceland is contributing medical personnel. In addition, the NATO Secretary-General has issued written invitations to 16 non-NATO countries to contribute forces to IFOR. These are Austria, the Czech Republic, Egypt, Estonia, Finland, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malaysia, Pakistan, Poland, Romania, the Russian Federation, Slovakia, Sweden and Ukraine. Participation agreements have been concluded with Austria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, Lithuania, Malaysia, Poland, Sweden and Ukraine. Of these, the Swedish forces were the first to have been transferred to the authority of IFOR, a Russian brigade is being deployed as part of MND(N) under special command arrangements and the

Slovakian forces are being transferred to United Nations command under the United Nations Transitional Administration for Eastern Slavonia, Baranja and Western Sirmium (UNTAES). Discussions are also under way concerning possible force contributions from Bulgaria, Bangladesh, Morocco and Jordan. Those units that were formerly part of UNPROFOR are either transferring to IFOR at a later date or will be withdrawn from the theatre under the control of IFOR.

5. Non-NATO IFOR contributors are incorporated into the operation through an IFOR coordination centre at SHAPE and liaison arrangements at various levels of IFOR. At NATO headquarters they receive daily written reports and briefings on the conduct of the operation. Regular political consultation takes place at the level of the North Atlantic Council (NAC) and at the deputy level. A second NAC meeting with non-NATO IFOR contributors was held on 15 January.

Risk assessment

6. The major risks to IFOR troops are those of the millions of mines that are scattered throughout Bosnia and undisciplined elements of the parties. Sniping and shooting incidents have occurred, including against IFOR aircraft, ground troops and civilians. Although these acts are assessed as coming from individuals or small uncontrolled groups, they remain a threat to IFOR operations and the public at large. It has been emphasized that IFOR commanders have both the right and the responsibility, consistent with their rules of engagement, to ensure the safety of their forces and, where possible, the public and that incidents such as these will be impartially dealt with in a firm manner. There also remains the continued risk from foreign troops within Bosnia and Herzegovina and IFOR has continued throughout the period to insist that they are withdrawn by 13 January.

7. To date, IFOR has suffered a small number of casualties due to incidents with mines, road accidents and from small arms fire. The number of such incidents has been relatively low and reflects the excellent planning, preparation and training that has taken place. However, IFOR will continue to take all possible measures to prevent any injury or loss of life among its forces.

Cooperation and compliance by the parties

8. So far, all parties to the Peace Agreement have continued to cooperate with the deployment of IFOR and there has been positive action in achieving the compliance conditions. Meetings between the parties and the IFOR Commander have focused on undisciplined firings, prisoner exchange and freedom of movement, as well as on the situations in Sarajevo and Mostar. However, the parties have so far demonstrated compliance with the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement and they have generally refrained from offensive actions. In addition:

- IFOR has witnessed the transfer and vacation of selected positions along the agreed cease-fire line in Sarajevo by the deadline of 27 December and in accordance with the instructions of the IFOR Commander.

- IFOR has also seen indications that all parties have been withdrawing from the confrontation lines and in the zones of separation in all three MND areas of responsibility. Any stand-off confrontations between the parties have so far been successfully defused by IFOR, but there is some evidence of attempts to camouflage heavy weapons left behind. Compliance is required by 19 January.

- IFOR has seen movement out of the areas to be transferred, although these actions are being marred by the destruction of property being left behind. Compliance is required by 3 February.

- The provision of minefield records and the initiation of voluntary actions to remove or destroy mines continues. The weather and lack of technical support for these actions is likely to delay full compliance by 19 January and some of the records are proving to be inaccurate.

- More recently, IFOR has seen the provision of lists of prisoners of war (POW) being provided to the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the first exchange of some POWs for transfer to the ICRC. However, the ICRC plan for POW release has not been fully realized, owing to concerns raised by one of the parties as to the completeness of the lists exchanged and the lack of accountability for other missing persons.

- There are indications that foreign forces have been withdrawing from Bosnia and Herzegovina and that armed civilian groups will be disarmed and disbanded. But it remains difficult to assess whether full compliance had been achieved by 13 January and will be achieved by 19 January, respectively. This is considered a serious matter and the situation will continue to be assessed.

9. There have been some restrictions on freedom of movement (FOM). In the case of civilians, these have been investigated and, especially in the case of the kidnapping incident within Sarajevo, FOM has been restored. However, there remains significant ignorance at the lower command levels of the former warring factions and this has, on occasions, presented IFOR with some tense negotiations in enforcing their own FOM.

10. The Joint Military Commission (JMC) has become well established and their meetings occur frequently. It is the major instrument to set the conditions and to clarify matters for accomplishing the military tasks of the Peace Agreement, for ensuring that information on the Peace Agreement is disseminated down to the lower levels and for emphasizing that IFOR presence is not a precondition for compliance. The JMCs are attended by all parties on the proviso that, in accordance with the Peace Agreement, no persons indicted by the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia will be permitted to participate. Emphasis has been placed on resolving problems at the lowest level, which has resulted in several additional regional meetings, and to allowing parties to report on progress. A recent agenda item has been the high level of charges that are being placed on IFOR for the provision of accommodation services, utilities and deployment transport facilities.

Cooperation with other organizations and the High Representative

11. As stated in the first report, the mission of IFOR is limited in function and in time, in accordance with the Peace Agreement and United Nations Security Council resolution 1031 (1995). The alliance looks to other organizations to carry out the civilian tasks defined in the Peace Agreement and necessary to ensure a lasting peace. The importance of establishing very soon a robust civil organization has been underlined by the recent allegations of kidnapping and theft in the Sarajevo suburbs and the confrontation in Mostar. These situations serve to emphasize that the civil aspects of implementation are the key to the long-term success in Bosnia. However, through our civil military cooperation (CIMIC) operations IFOR has established an effective mechanism to coordinate activities with the many international non-governmental and other civilian organizations contributing to the reconstruction of Bosnia and Herzegovina. IFOR will assist, to the extent possible within its mandate and available resources, the civilian part of the implementation process. Full coordination is being established between the IFOR Commander and Mr. Carl Bildt, the High Representative and his staff.

12. The High Representative conducted the first of the bi-weekly meetings of the Joint Civil Commission (JCC) with the Serb and Moslem communities, international organizations and IFOR, on 12 January. Mr. Bildt was invited to meet the NAC on 17 January where he acknowledged the efficient deployment of IFOR and the adequacy of the Peace Agreement structures, outlined the important civilian tasks ahead and emphasized that reconciliation between all the parties was the key to a stable and lasting peace.

Visit of the NATO Secretary-General

13. The Secretary-General of NATO, Mr. Javier Solana, visited the theatre on 11 and 12 January 1996. The visit proved very successful and the Secretary-General was able to meet with the leaders of all the parties, with the High Representative, Mr. Carl Bildt, and with the IFOR Commanders.

14. The general impressions of the visit were given to both the NATO and non-NATO IFOR contributors at their meeting on 15 January. These impressions focused on the current success and stabilizing effect of the IFOR deployment, the tensions that remain in both Sarajevo and Mostar and the fact that the most important efforts of the High Representative in building inter-communal reconciliation and grass-roots level cooperation had begun with determination.